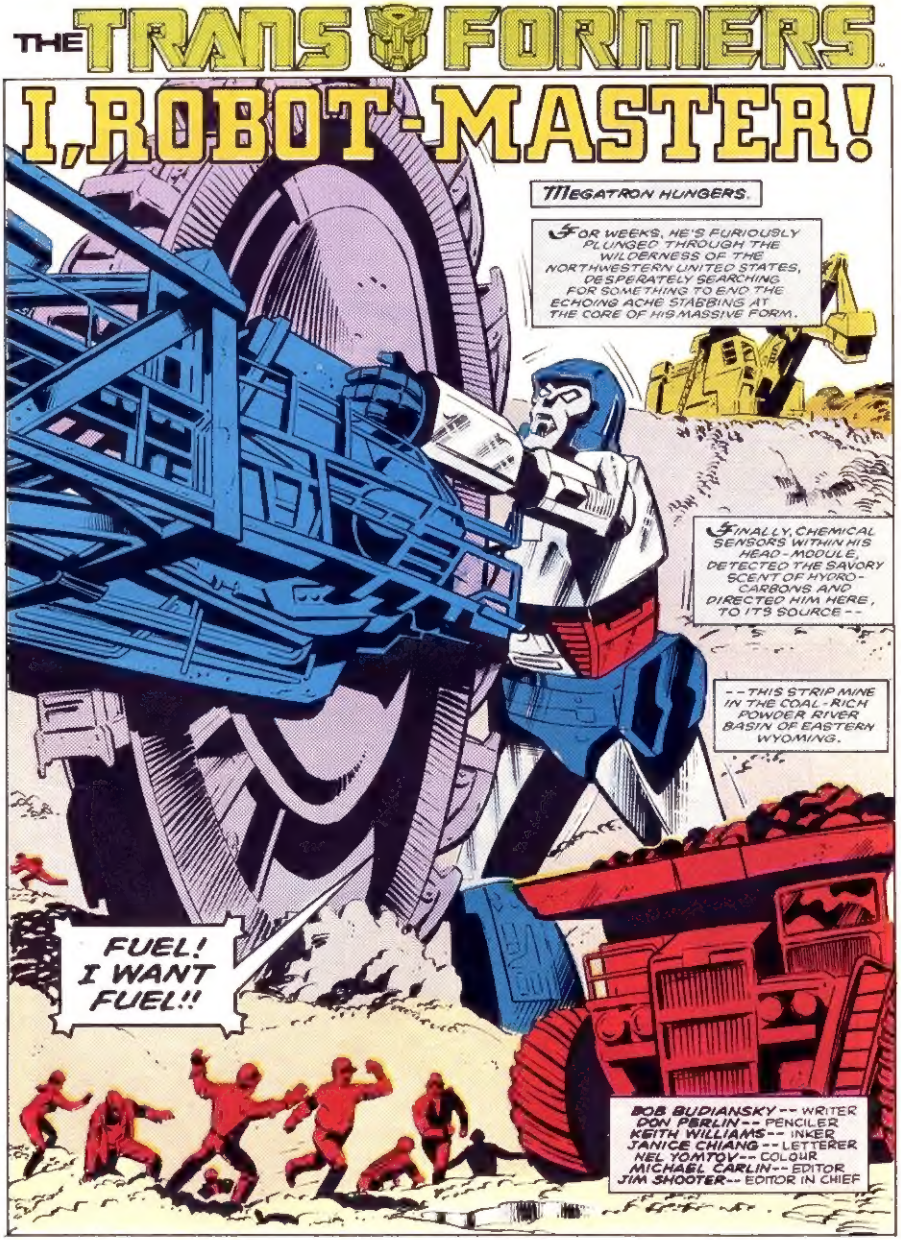
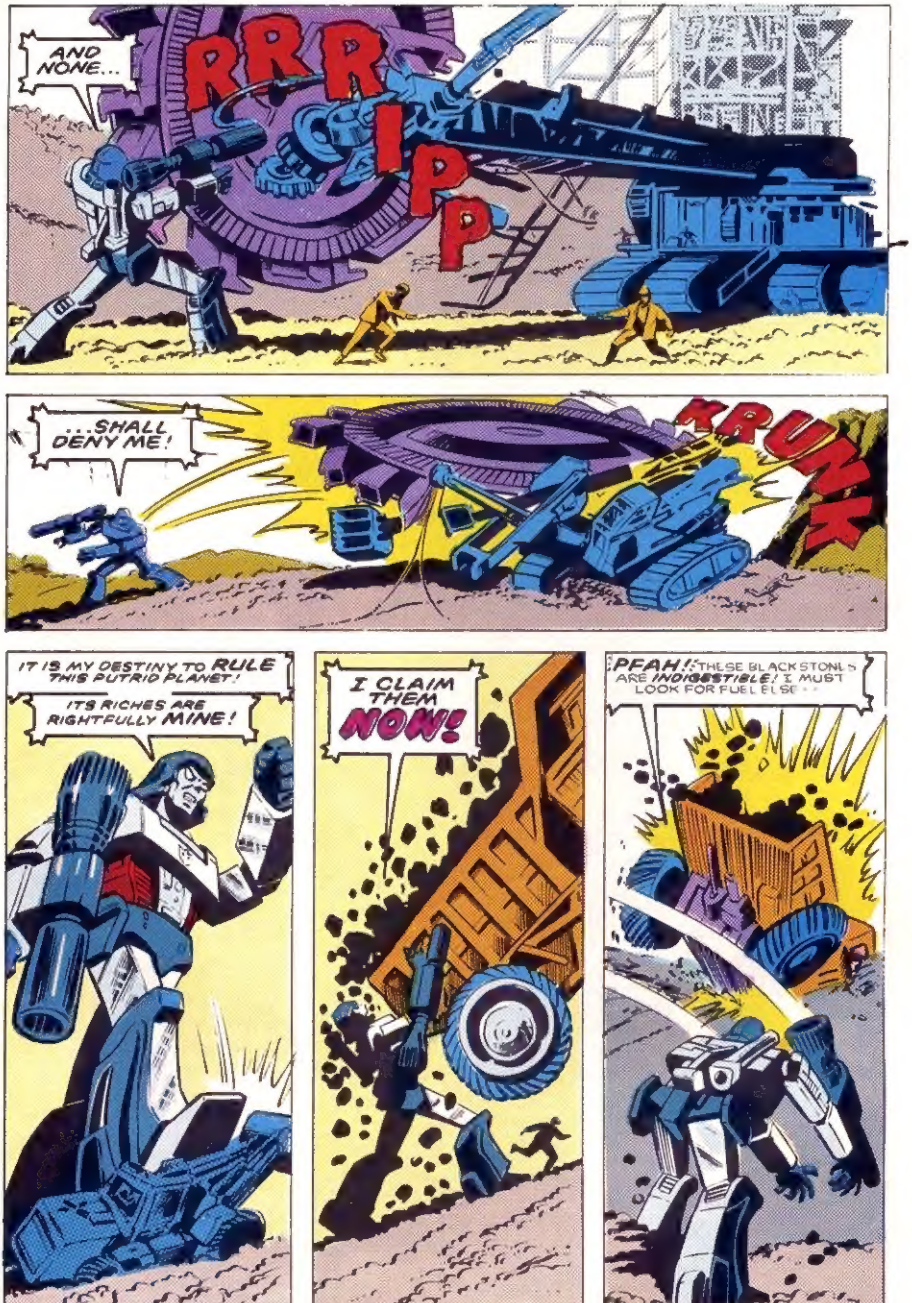
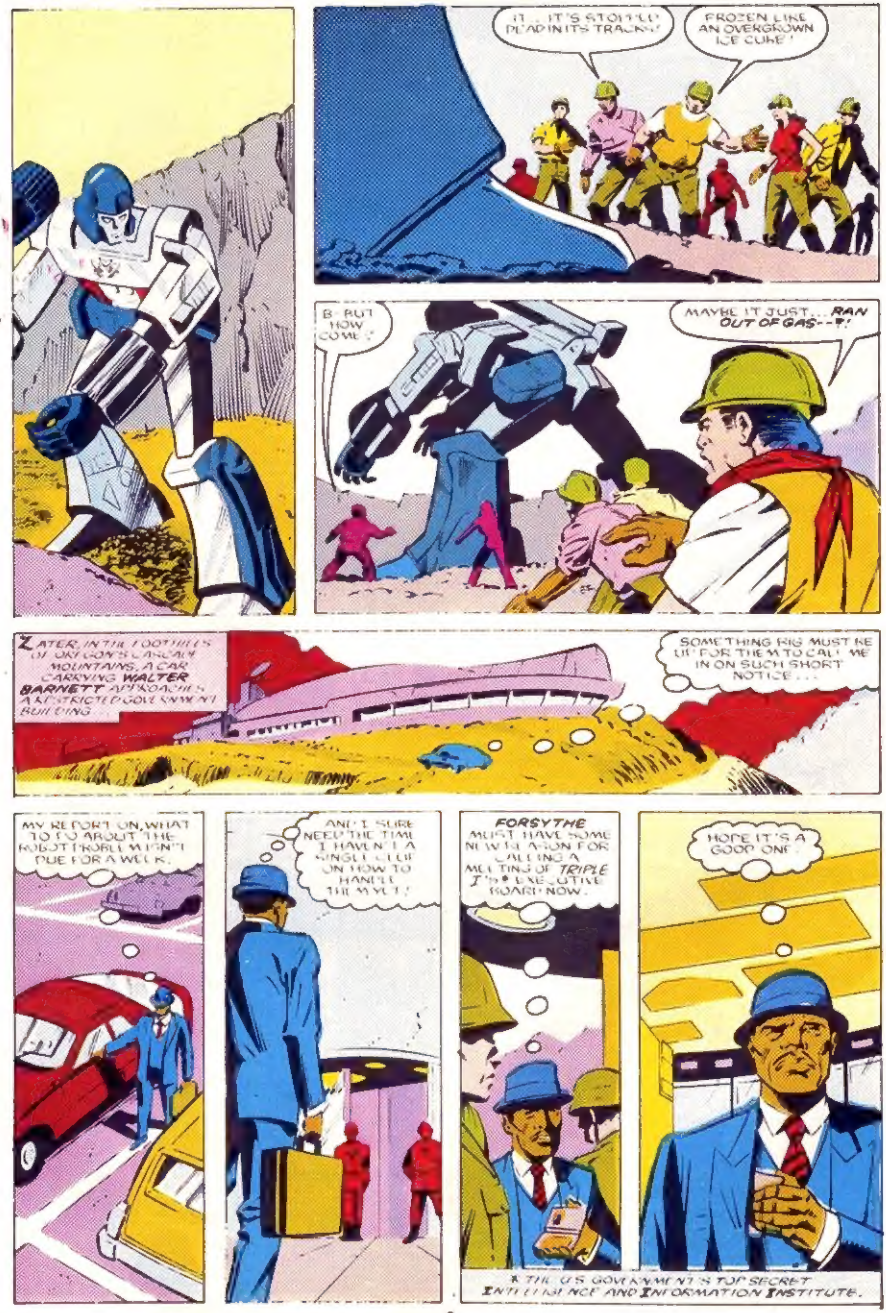
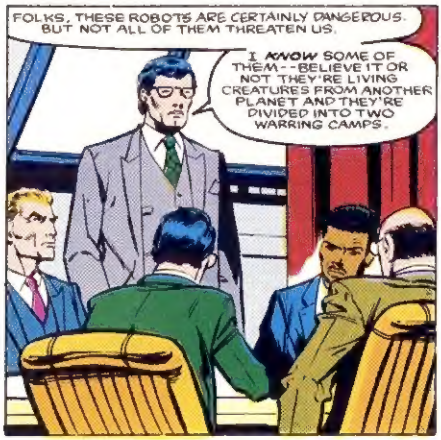
MARVEL
5th Apr '86
No55 30p
THE TRANSFORMERS
HEROIC
AUTOBOT
ROBOT MASTER
MARVEL
5th Apr '86
No55 30p
THE MAN BEHIND THE MACHINES!


THE TRANSFORMERS
I, ROBOT-MASTER!
MEGATRON HUNGERS.
FOR WEEKS, HE'S FURIOUSLY PLUNGED THROUGH THE WILDERNESS OF THE NORTHWESTERN UNITED STATES, DESPERATELY SEARCHING FOR SOMETHING TO END THE ECHOING ACHE STABBING AT THE CORE OF HIS MASSIVE FORM.
FINALLY, CHEMICAL SENSORS WITHIN HIS HEAD-MODULE DETECTED THE SAVORY SCENT OF HYDRO-CARBONS AND DIRECTED HIM HERE, TO ITS SOURCE--
--THIS STRIP MINE IN THE COAL-RICH POWDER RIVER BASIN OF EASTERN WYOMING.
FUEL! I WANT FUEL!!
BOB BUDIANSKY -- WRITER
DON PERLIN -- PENCILER
KEITH WILLIAMS -- INKER
JANICE CHIANG -- LETTERER
NEL YOMTOV -- COLOUR
MICHAEL CARLIN -- EDITOR
JIM SHOOTER -- EDITOR IN CHIEF


AND NONE...
RRRIPP
...SHALL DENY ME!
KRUNK
IT IS MY DESTINY TO RULE THIS PUTRID PLANET!
ITS RICHES ARE RIGHTFULLY MINE!
I CLAIM THEM NOW!
PFAH! THESE BLACK STONES ARE INDIGESTIBLE! I MUST LOOK FOR FUEL ELSE...


IT... IT'S STOPPED DEAD IN ITS TRACKS!
FROZEN LIKE AN OVERGROWN ICE CUBE!
B-BUT HOW COME?
MAYBE IT JUST... RAN OUT OF GAS--?!
LATER, IN THE FOOTHILLS OF OREGON'S CASCADE MOUNTAINS, A CAR CARRYING WALTER BARNETT APPROACHES A RESTRICTED GOVERNMENT BUILDING...
SOMETHING BIG MUST BE UP FOR THEM TO CALL ME IN ON SUCH SHORT NOTICE...
MY REPORT ON WHAT TO DO ABOUT THE ROBOT PROBLEM ISN'T DUE FOR A WEEK.
AND I SURE NEED THE TIME! I HAVEN'T A SINGLE CLUE ON HOW TO HANDLE THIS MESS!
FORSYTHE MUST HAVE SOME NEWS AS TO FOR CALLING A MEETING OF TRIPLE I'S* EXECUTIVE BOARD! NOW...
HOPE IT'S A GOOD ONE!
* THE U.S. GOVERNMENT'S TOP SECRET INTELLIGENCE AND INFORMATION INSTITUTE.

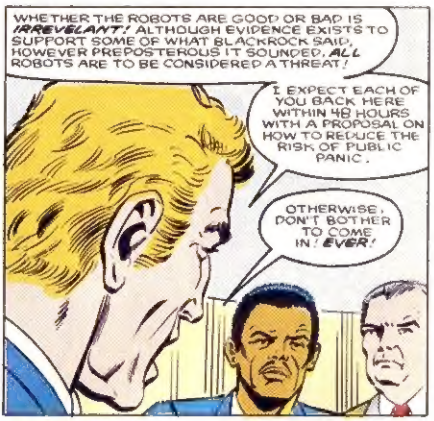
HAVE A SEAT, WALT. WE'RE JUST ABOUT TO START.
AS YOU ALL KNOW, TRIPLE-I'S BEEN ASKED TO DO SOMETHING THE MILITARY HAS SO FAR FAILED TO DO--PROTECT THE PUBLIC FROM THE GIANT ROBOT MENACE.
SINCE WE'RE NOT EQUIPPED TO DEFUSE THIS THREAT WITH WEAPONRY, WE MUST USE OUR WITS--TO COME UP WITH AN EXPLANATION THE PUBLIC WILL BUY.
WE'VE BEEN TRYING TO FIND OUT WHO'S BEHIND THE ROBOTS--A HOSTILE FOREIGN POWER PERHAPS, A SECRET TERRORIST ORGANIZATION...WE DON'T KNOW, AND WE DON'T KNOW WHEN WE WILL.
BUT WE NEED A PLAN NOW!
FORSYTHE SOUNDS EVEN GRIMMER THAN USUAL.
RECENTLY, THE ROBOTS' ACTIVITIES HAVE INCREASED MARKEDLY.
FOR EXAMPLE, A HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL STADIUM WAS TRAMPLED INTO SPLINTERS.
THE BLACKROCK AEROSPACE ASSEMBLY PLANT WAS OVERRUN.
JUST DAYS AGO, THE LIVES OF 80,000 PEOPLE WERE JEOPARDIZED AT A ROCK CONCERT.
IN EVERY CASE, PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THIS PROBLEM SPREAD, AND WITH IT, PUBLIC HYSTERIA.
EARLY TODAY ONE OF THE ROBOTS APPEARED IN A MINING PIT AND, FOR REASONS UNKNOWN, BECAME IMMOBILE! THIS IS OUR FIRST CAPTIVE!
BUT MANY OTHERS REMAIN, AND ALL MUST BE DESTROYED.
YOU'VE ALL HEARD OF MR. G.B. BLACKROCK, PRESIDENT OF THE BLACKROCK CORPORATE CONGLOMERATE.
I'VE INVITED HIM HERE SINCE HE'S HAD A LOT OF FIRST-HAND EXPERIENCE WITH THE ROBOTS. MR. BLACKROCK...


FOLKS, THESE ROBOTS ARE CERTAINLY DANGEROUS. BUT NOT ALL OF THEM THREATEN US.
I KNOW SOME OF THEM -- BELIEVE IT OR NOT THEY'RE LIVING CREATURES FROM ANOTHER PLANET AND THEY'RE DIVIDED INTO TWO WARRING CAMPS.

FIRST, THERE ARE THE AUTOBOTS -- A NOBLE, HONOURABLE GROUP. THEY HELPED ME TO RECOVER MY AEROSPACE PLANT. THEY SEEK TO STOP THE DECEPTICONS FROM CONQUERING THIS PLANET.
THE FIRST STEP IN SOLVING THIS PROBLEM IS DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN THE TWO GROUPS. THE AUTOBOTS CAN BE OUR ALLIES. WE MUST--

ER, THANK YOU, MR. BLACKROCK, FOR YOUR TIME. WE KNOW YOU'RE A BUSY MAN.
BUT I HAD MORE TO--

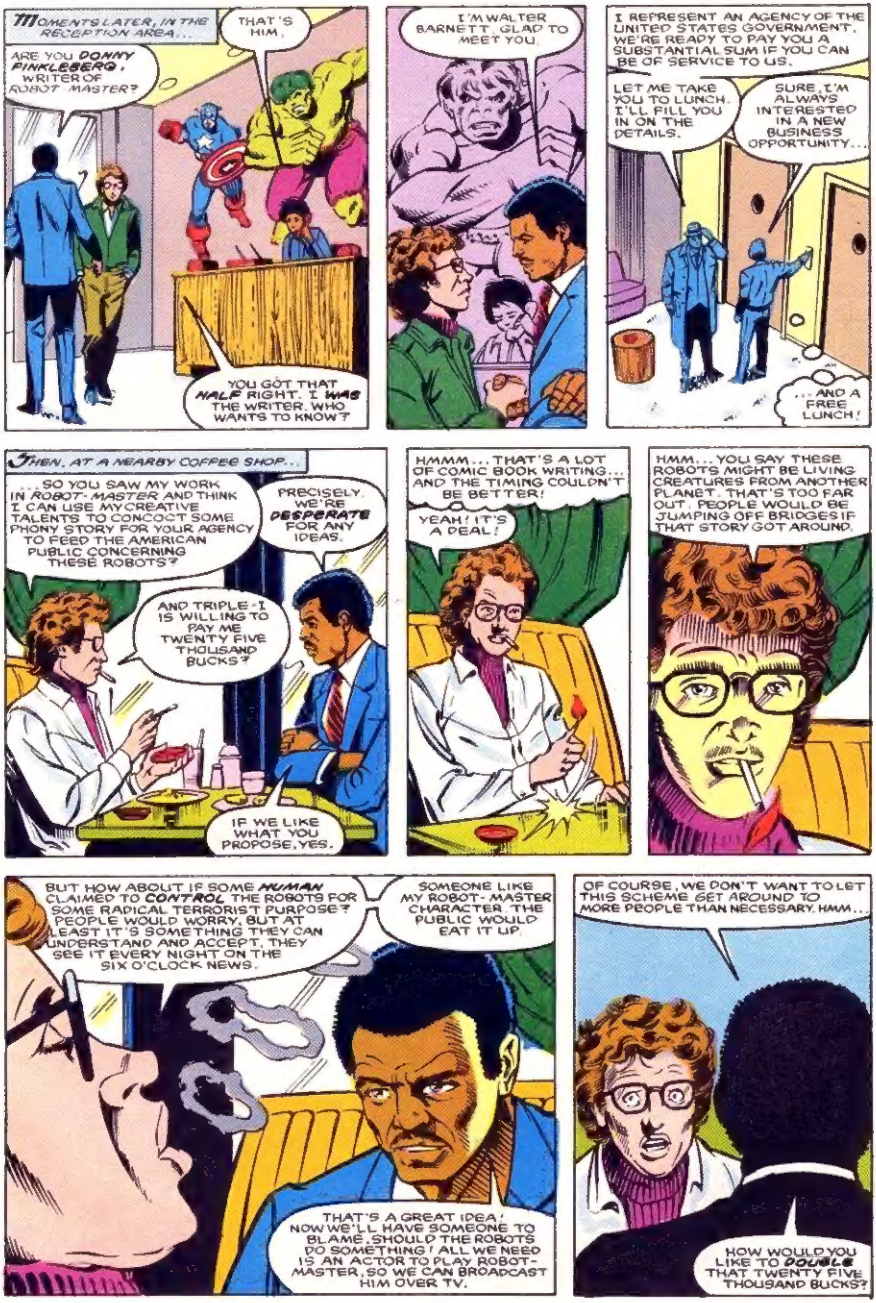
WE'LL BE IN TOUCH IF WE REQUIRE YOUR EXPERTISE AGAIN!
YEAH, GLAD I COULD HELP...
EXIT

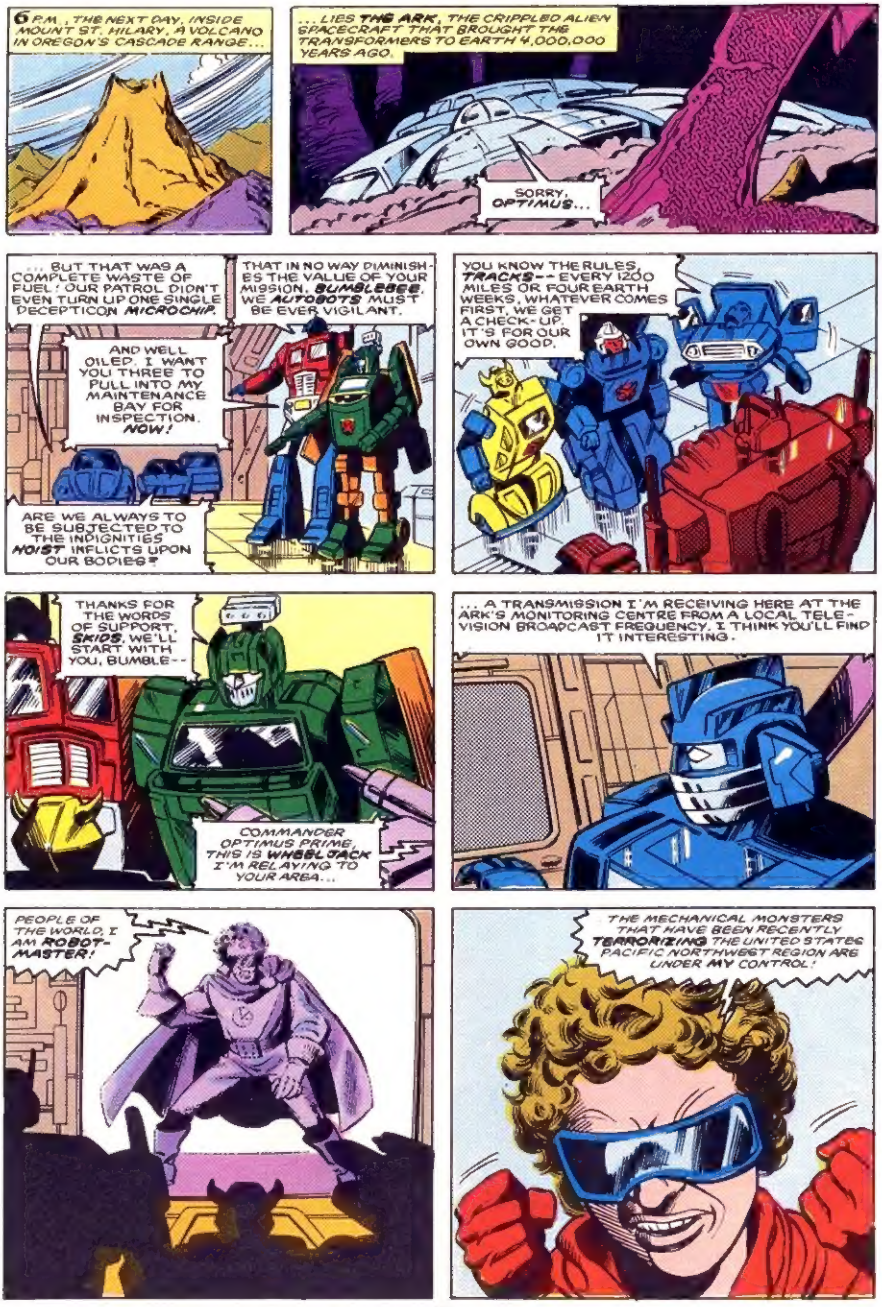

WHETHER THE ROBOTS ARE GOOD OR BAD IS IRRELEVANT! ALTHOUGH EVIDENCE EXISTS TO SUPPORT SOME OF WHAT BLACKROCK SAID, HOWEVER PREPOSTEROUS IT SOUNDED, ALL ROBOTS ARE TO BE CONSIDERED A THREAT!
I EXPECT EACH OF YOU BACK HERE WITHIN 48 HOURS WITH A PROPOSAL ON HOW TO REDUCE THE RISK OF PUBLIC PANIC.
OTHERWISE, DON'T BOTHER TO COME IN! EVER!

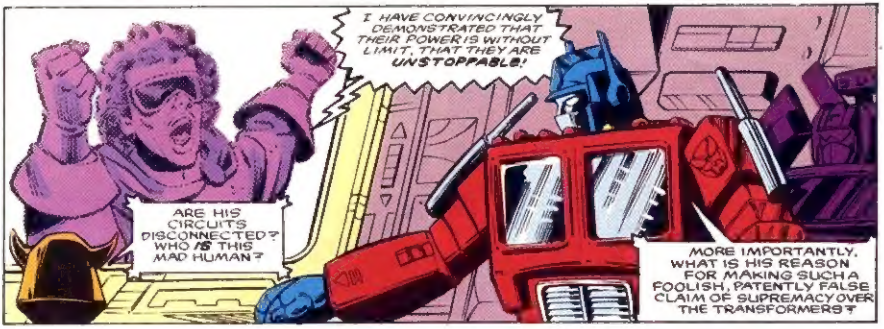
SOON...
48 HOURS? WHAT AM I GONNA THINK OF IN 48 HOURS?
BLAST!

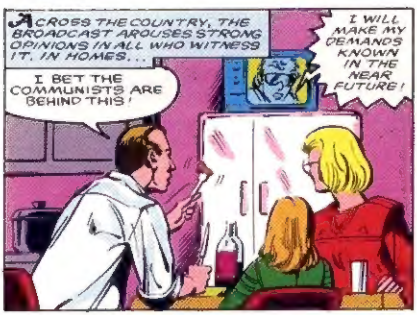
DADDY! YOU'RE BACK!
STEVIE...

STEVIE, I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU TO KEEP THIS PLACE NEAT! CLEAN UP THIS MESS! NOW!
S-SORRY, DAD...
WAIT A SECOND-- WHAT'S THAT? LET ME SEE IT.
MY ROBOT-MASTER COMIC BOOK?
ROBOT-MASTER
HMMM..." I AM ROBOT-MASTER AND NO POWER ON THIS WORLD OR ANY OTHER CAN STOP MY ROBOT ARMY!" HMMM, INTERESTING...
WALT, DID YOU JUST GET IN? I THOUGHT I HEARD YOU YELLING AT STEVIE!
ROBOT MASTER
HONEY, I'LL EXPLAIN LATER. I... I HAVE TO RUN NOW. CATCH A PLANE...
"...TO NEW YORK!"
LATER, AT THE NEW YORK CITY OFFICES OF A FAMOUS COMIC BOOK PUBLISHING COMPANY...
387
PARK AV
FOR THE LAST TIME, FINKLEBERG--ROBOT-MASTER IS CANCELLED! KAPUT!
AND I'M NOT INTERESTED IN DOING A POTATO-SALAD MAN GRAPHIC NOVEL CALLED THIS MAN, THIS MAYONNAISE, EITHER!
BUT, BOSS, JUST GIVE ME A CHANCE! I CAN SELL ANY STORY...
...ANY STORY...

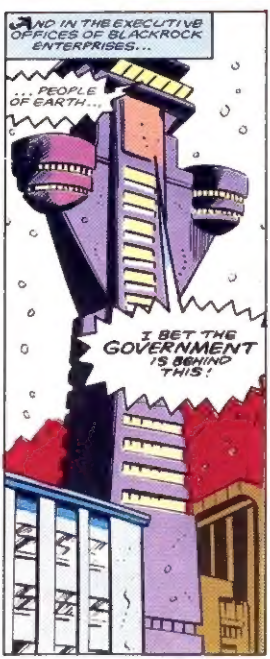

MOMENTS LATER, IN THE RECEPTION AREA...
ARE YOU DONNY PINKLEBERG, WRITER OF ROBOT MASTER?
THAT'S HIM.
YOU GOT THAT HALF RIGHT. I WAS THE WRITER. WHO WANTS TO KNOW?
I'M WALTER BARNETT. GLAD TO MEET YOU.
I REPRESENT AN AGENCY OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT. WE'RE READY TO PAY YOU A SUBSTANTIAL SUM IF YOU CAN BE OF SERVICE TO US.
LET ME TAKE YOU TO LUNCH. I'LL FILL YOU IN ON THE DETAILS.
SURE, I'M ALWAYS INTERESTED IN A NEW BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY...
...AND A FREE LUNCH!
THEN, AT A NEARBY COFFEE SHOP...
...SO YOU SAW MY WORK IN ROBOT-MASTER AND THINK I CAN USE MY CREATIVE TALENTS TO CONCOCT SOME PHONY STORY FOR YOUR AGENCY TO FEED THE AMERICAN PUBLIC CONCERNING THESE ROBOTS?
PRECISELY. WE'RE DESPERATE FOR ANY IDEAS.
AND TRIPLE-I IS WILLING TO PAY ME TWENTY FIVE THOUSAND BUCKS?
IF WE LIKE WHAT YOU PROPOSE, YES.
HMMM... THAT'S A LOT OF COMIC BOOK WRITING... AND THE TIMING COULDN'T BE BETTER!
YEAH! IT'S A DEAL!
HMM... YOU SAY THESE ROBOTS MIGHT BE LIVING CREATURES FROM ANOTHER PLANET. THAT'S TOO FAR OUT. PEOPLE WOULD BE JUMPING OFF BRIDGES IF THAT STORY GOT AROUND.
BUT HOW ABOUT IF SOME HUMAN CLAIMED TO CONTROL THE ROBOTS FOR SOME RADICAL TERRORIST PURPOSE? PEOPLE WOULD WORRY, BUT AT LEAST IT'S SOMETHING THEY CAN UNDERSTAND AND ACCEPT. THEY SEE IT EVERY NIGHT ON THE SIX O'CLOCK NEWS.
SOMEONE LIKE MY ROBOT-MASTER CHARACTER. THE PUBLIC WOULD EAT IT UP.
THAT'S A GREAT IDEA! NOW WE'LL HAVE SOMEONE TO BLAME. SHOULD THE ROBOTS DO SOMETHING! ALL WE NEED IS AN ACTOR TO PLAY ROBOT-MASTER, SO WE CAN BROADCAST HIM OVER TV.
OF COURSE, WE DON'T WANT TO LET THIS SCHEME GET AROUND TO MORE PEOPLE THAN NECESSARY. HMM...
HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO DOUBLE THAT TWENTY FIVE THOUSAND BUCKS?


6 P.M., THE NEXT DAY, INSIDE MOUNT ST. HILARY, A VOLCANO IN OREGON'S CASCADE RANGE...
...LIES THE ARK, THE CRIPPLED ALIEN SPACECRAFT THAT BROUGHT THE TRANSFORMERS TO EARTH 4,000,000 YEARS AGO.
SORRY, OPTIMUS...
... BUT THAT WAS A COMPLETE WASTE OF FUEL! OUR PATROL DIDN'T EVEN TURN UP ONE SINGLE DECEPTICON MICROCHIP.
THAT IN NO WAY DIMINISHES THE VALUE OF YOUR MISSION, BUMBLEBEE. WE AUTOBOTS MUST BE EVER VIGILANT.
AND WELL OILED. I WANT YOU THREE TO PULL INTO MY MAINTENANCE BAY FOR INSPECTION. NOW!
ARE WE ALWAYS TO BE SUBJECTED TO THE INDIGNITIES HOIST INFLICTS UPON OUR BODIES?
YOU KNOW THE RULES, TRACKS -- EVERY 1200 MILES OR FOUR EARTH WEEKS, WHATEVER COMES FIRST, WE GET A CHECK-UP. IT'S FOR OUR OWN GOOD.
THANKS FOR THE WORDS OF SUPPORT, SKIDS. WE'LL START WITH YOU, BUMBLE--
COMMANDER OPTIMUS PRIME, THIS IS WHEELJACK I'M RELAYING TO YOUR AREA...
... A TRANSMISSION I'M RECEIVING HERE AT THE ARK'S MONITORING CENTRE FROM A LOCAL TELEVISION BROADCAST FREQUENCY. I THINK YOU'LL FIND IT INTERESTING.
PEOPLE OF THE WORLD, I AM ROBOT-MASTER!
THE MECHANICAL MONSTERS THAT HAVE BEEN RECENTLY TERRORIZING THE UNITED STATES PACIFIC NORTHWEST REGION ARE UNDER MY CONTROL!


I HAVE CONVINCINGLY DEMONSTRATED THAT THEIR POWER IS WITHOUT LIMIT, THAT THEY ARE UNSTOPPABLE!
ARE HIS CIRCUITS DISCONNECTED? WHO IS THIS MAD HUMAN?
MORE IMPORTANTLY, WHAT IS HIS REASON FOR MAKING SUCH A FOOLISH, PATENTLY FALSE CLAIM OF SUPREMACY OVER THE TRANSFORMERS?


ACROSS THE COUNTRY, THE BROADCAST AROUSES STRONG OPINIONS IN ALL WHO WITNESS IT. IN HOMES...
I WILL MAKE MY DEMANDS KNOWN IN THE NEAR FUTURE!
I BET THE COMMUNISTS ARE BEHIND THIS!

IN STORES...
I BET THE P.L.O. IS BEHIND THIS!
UNTIL THEN, I LEAVE YOU WITH THIS WARNING...


AND IN THE EXECUTIVE OFFICES OF BLACKROCK ENTERPRISES...
...PEOPLE OF EARTH...
I BET THE GOVERNMENT IS BEHIND THIS!

...SUBMIT TO THE WILL OF ROBOT-MASTER!
FORSYTHE AND HIS CREW MUST HAVE CREATED THIS IDIOT! THOSE JERKS!

...OR BE TRAMPLED BENEATH THE FEET OF MY ROBOT ARMY!
GREAT! WITH OUR SATELLITE HOOK-UP, EVERY TV PROGRAM IN AMERICA WAS INTERRUPTED BY THAT BROADCAST--AND NO ONE WILL BE ABLE TO TRACE IT HERE, TRIPLE-I'S OWN STUDIO!

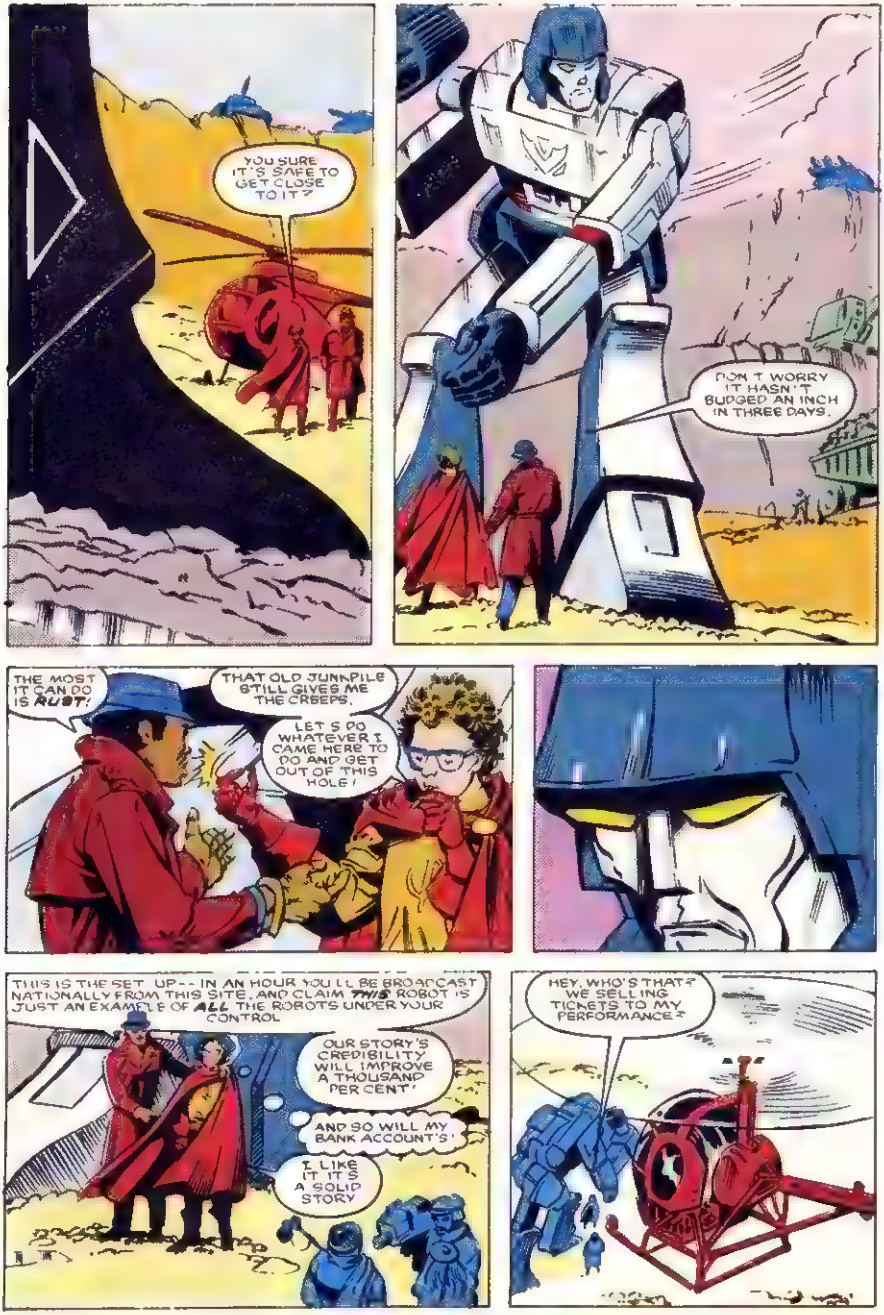
WHEW! I'M GLAD THAT'S OVER! I NEVER WANTED TO POSE AS THIS GUY IN THE FIRST PLACE!
YOU DID A GREAT JOB, DONNY! YOU SHOULD BE HAPPY!
YEAH... I GUESS I WAS PRETTY CONVINCING, WASN'T I? Y'KNOW, GIVEN A CHANCE I CAN SELL ANY STORY...
...STILL, I'D JUST AS SOON GET BACK TO WAITING 'EM INSTEAD OF PERFORMING 'EM!
NO PROBLEM! YOUR JOB'S DONE HERE. STOP BY ANY TIME TOMORROW AND YOUR CHECK WILL BE WAITING FOR YOU.
IS 9A.M. TOO EARLY?
8:30 A.M. THE FOLLOWING DAY, IN AN EXCLUSIVE NEIGHBOURHOOD ON PORTLAND'S WEST SIDE...
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
MR BLACKROCK, DO YOU RECALL SEEING ROBOT-MASTER WHEN THE ROBOTS INVADED YOUR AEROSPACE PLANE?
WAS HE INVOLVED IN THE ROBOTS' ASSAULT ON YOUR OFFSHORE OIL DRILLING PLATFORM?
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN OF THE PRESS, I NEVER SAW ROBOT-MASTER TILL LAST NIGHT ON TV--AND I'M SURE NO ONE ELSE DID EITHER!
ARE YOU SAYING HE DIDN'T EXIST BEFORE LAST NIGHT?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT STATEMENT?
ER, NO COMMENT. EXCUSE ME, FELLAS, I HAVE TO GET TO WORK.
YOUR CAR, SIR.
THANKS, JEFFRIES. I'LL... UH, WAIT A MOMENT...
THAT... CAR... WHAT'S IT DOING HERE?
I THINK I'LL DRIVE IN BY MYSELF TODAY.
AS YOU WISH, SIR.
MR BLACKROCK, ARE YOU SUGGESTING THAT ROBOT MASTER IS A HOAX?
LOOK, I'M NOT SUGGESTING ANYTHING. DON'T YOU GUYS HAVE AN AMBULANCE TO CHASE?
HE KNOWS SOMETHING.
VRROOOM
YEP!

MOMENTS LATER
ALL RIGHT, BUMBLEBEE, 'FESS UP -- WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE?
OPTIMUS WAS HOPING YOU COULD EXPLAIN THE MEANING OF THE ROBOT-MASTER BROADCAST.
I'M PRETTY CERTAIN IT'S A PUBLIC RELATIONS SCAM BY THE GOVERNMENT TO EXPLAIN YOUR PRESENCE. IT SURE BEATS TELLING THE TRUTH -- THAT YOU'RE LIVING CREATURES FROM ANOTHER PLANET.
BUT WE AUTOBOTS WANT TO HELP! WHY DION'T ROBOT-MASTER DISTINGUISH US FROM THE DECEPTICONS?
TO THE GOVERNMENT, YOU RE ALL A THREAT. I TRIED TO TELL THEM YOU GUYS CAN BE OUR ALLIES, BUT THEY DIDN'T WANT TO LISTEN
I'LL TRY AGAIN
WE'D BE MOST GRATEFUL ONE LAST QUESTION -- WHY WOULD ANY HUMAN BELIEVE A STORY AS RIDICULOUS AS ROBOT-MASTER'S?
DON'T UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF TELEVISION, BUM. IF PEOPLE BELIEVE WHAT THE PRESIDENT SAYS ON THE TUBE ABOUT BALANCING THE BUDGET,
THEY'LL BELIEVE ANYTHING.
MEANWHILE...
DID YOU HEAR THAT, WALT? THAT NEWSCASTER SAID ROBOT-MASTER'S A FAKE -- AND ALL BECAUSE OF BLACKROCK'S BIG MOUTH!
I HEARD IT.
GET A HOLD OF BLACKROCK, TELL HIM TO RECANT WHAT HE SAID, AND THEN NAIL HIS MOUTH SHUT -- BEFORE OUR STORY IS BLOWN COMPLETELY OUT OF THE WATER!
RIGHT AWAY, MR FORSYTHE
IN A RELATED STORY
WE'VE JUST RECEIVED THIS PHOTO FROM A CONFIDENTIAL SOURCE WHO SAYS IT WAS TAKEN AT THE CULVERTON COAL MINE IN WYOMING. IT APPEARS TO SHOW A CAPTIVE ROBOT.
WHAT?! HOW'D THAT GET PAST SECURITY?! I WANT TO FIND OUT WHO'S RESPONSIBLE FOR --
KNOCK KNOCK
HOLD ON -- THIS COULD BE THE BREAK WE NEED
ER, EXCUSE ME, FELLAS, BUT I HAVE A 10:30 FLIGHT, SO IF I COULD JUST PICK UP MY PAYCHECK, I'LL --
DONNY! GOOD TO SEE YOU!
BUT WHY RUN HOME SO QUICKLY...
ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU CAN DOUBLE THAT MONEY BY STAYING JUST ONE MORE DAY...
NEXT: I, MASTER-ROBOT!

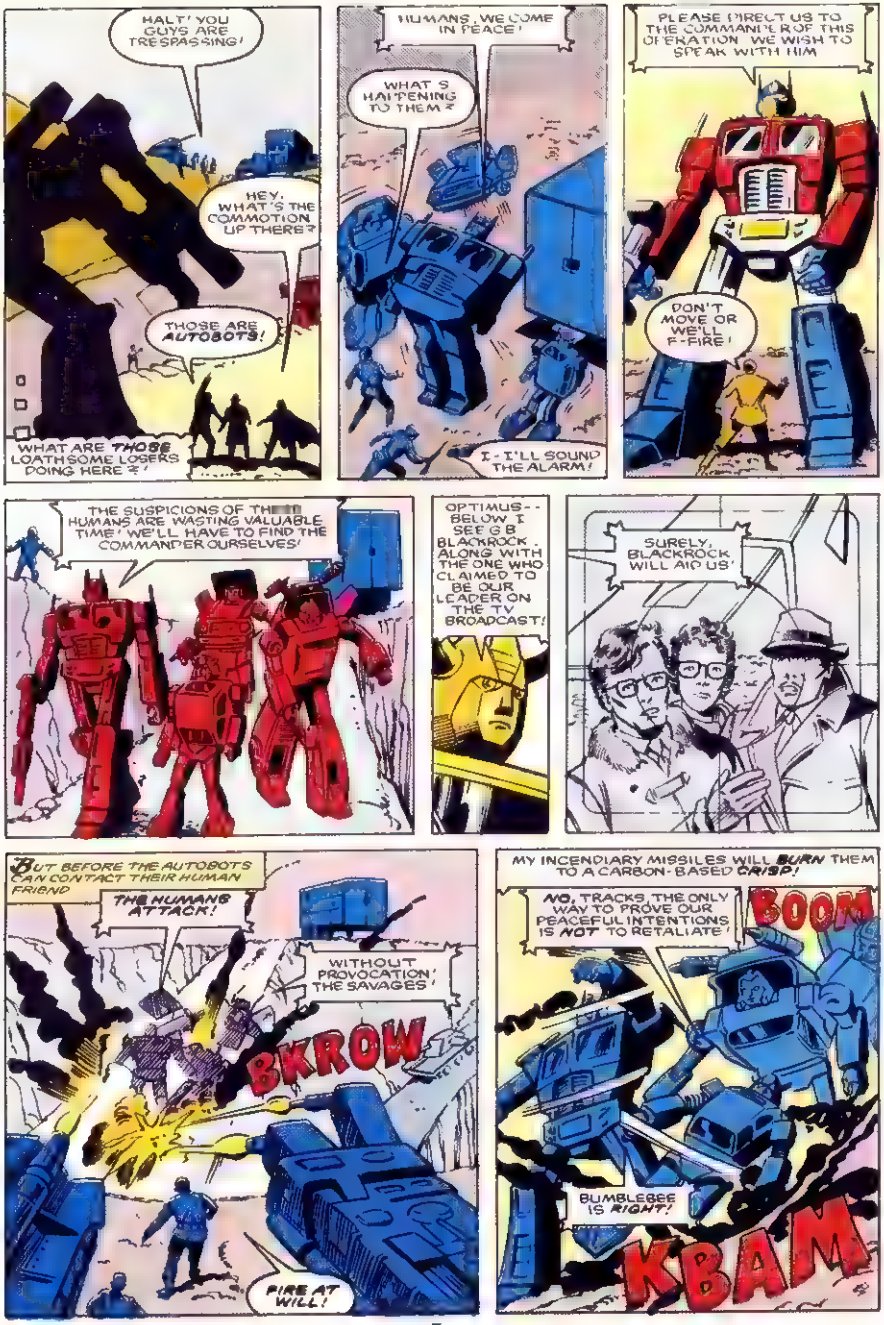
MARVEL
THE TRANSFORMERS
HEROIC AUTOBOT
No56 30p
U.S. ARMY

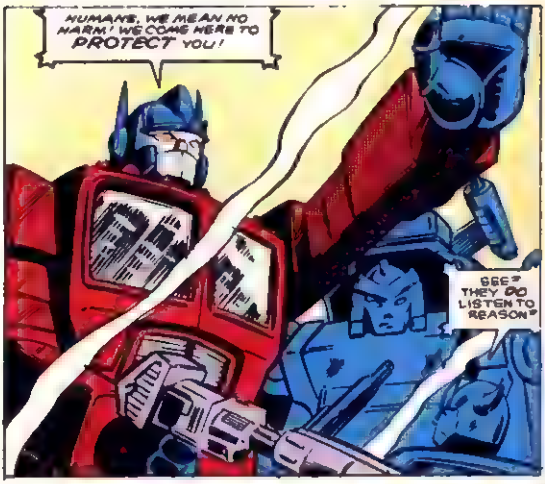
AND AT THE ARK..
USING THE INFORMATION PROVIDED IN THE BROADCAST, I'VE PINPOINTED MEGATRON'S LOCATION, OPTIMUS
WELL DONE, WHEELJACK. TRANSMIT THE COORDINATES TO MY MAPPING CIRCUITRY. WE HAVEN'T A MICROSECOND TO WASTE
THE HUMANS IN THAT AREA HAVE NO IDEA HOW DANGEROUS MEGATRON IS! WE MUST BRING HIM HERE FOR SAFEKEEPING!
BLUMBLEEEE.. TRACKS, SKIDS.. TRANSFORM...
AND ROLL OUT!
A SHORT TIME LATER IN DOWNTOWN PORTLAND.
SHARP T.V.
YEAH, IT'S A RATHER UNUSUAL PORTABLE CASSETTE
BECKY'S COFFEE SHOP
NEVER SEEN ANOTHER ONE LIKE IT. FOUND IT IN FRONT OF THE STORE ONE MORNING OR ALL PLACES!
HOW MUCH FOR IT?
IT IS TIME FOR THE SIGNAL
I DON'T KNOW. LET'S SEE HOW IT PLAYS FIRST. IT CAME WITH THIS TAPE.
SKREEEEK

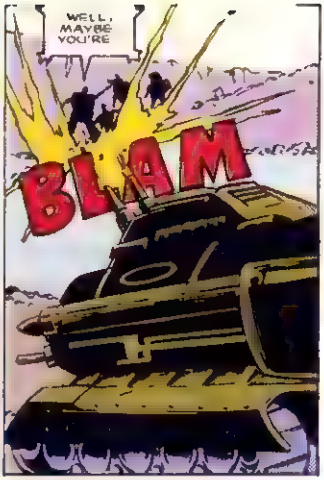
HOLY MACKERAL!! WHAT'S HAPPENING?
GRAAWR
THE CASSETTE YOU PLAYED JUST TRANSFORMED INTA A--A JAGUAR!
IN A FRACTION OF A SECOND THE RAMPAGING CREATION RAVAGE MAKES HIS WAY TO THE CASSETTE DECK OTHERWISE KNOWN AS SOUNDWAVE--
RESPONDING TO SOUNDWAVE'S SONIC SIGNAL LASERBEAK AND BUZZSAW SWOOP DOWN FROM THE RAIN OF ARMY ANTS!
DELICA
AND THE FOUR DECEPTICONS FLY OFF INTO THE EASTERN SKY
A FEW HOURS LATER
THAT'S IT, PONNY SOME SIGHT EH?
IT SURE IS MEAN LOOKING FOR A TIN CAN, WALT AND UGLY!
UNITED
FOR THAT REMARK, I WILL CRUSH YOU INTO PROTOPLASMIC PULP, FLESHLING--WHEN I CAN MOVE AGAIN!


YOU SURE IT'S SAFE TO GET CLOSE TO IT?
DON'T WORRY IT HASN'T BUDGED AN INCH IN THREE DAYS.
THE MOST IT CAN DO IS RUST!
THAT OLD JUNKPILE STILL GIVES ME THE CREEPS.
LET'S DO WHATEVER I CAME HERE TO DO AND GET OUT OF THIS HOLE!
THIS IS THE SET UP -- IN AN HOUR YOU'LL BE BROADCAST NATIONALLY FROM THIS SITE, AND CLAIM THIS ROBOT IS JUST AN EXAMPLE OF ALL THE ROBOTS UNDER YOUR CONTROL
OUR STORY'S CREDIBILITY WILL IMPROVE A THOUSAND PER CENT!
AND SO WILL MY BANK ACCOUNT'S!
I LIKE IT IT'S A SOLID STORY
HEY, WHO'S THAT? WE SELLING TICKETS TO MY PERFORMANCE?

BLACKROCK! GLAD YOU ANSWERED MY INVITATION! LOOK, YOU HAVE TO DO US A FAVOR--
--PUBLICLY TAKE BACK WHAT YOU SAID ABOUT ROBOT-MASTER
TAKE IT BACK?! YOU'RE LUCKY I DIDN'T SAY MORE! LIKE HOW IDIOTIC IT IS TO HAVE GOVERNMENT POLICY LUMP POTENTIAL ALLIES LIKE THE AUTOBOTS IN THE SAME BOAT WITH MENACES LIKE THE DECEPTICONS!
YOU'VE GOT TO RECONSIDER!
THERE'S NOTHING TO RECONSIDER! IF YOU DON'T WANT TO HELP US, BUTT OUT! WE'LL GET BY WITHOUT YOU!
MAYBE YOU WILL, BUT MULL THIS OVER--HOW LONG DO YOU THINK THE DECEPTICONS ARE GOING TO TOLERATE THIS CLOWN CLAIMING TO BE THEIR LEADER?
HEY, I RESENT BEING CALLED A--
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I MEAN CIGARETTE SMOKING ISN'T GOING TO BE THE ONLY HAZARD TO THIS GUY'S HEALTH!
I HOPE HE'S MADE OUT HIS WILL!


HALT! YOU GUYS ARE TRESPASSING!
HEY, WHAT'S THE COMMOTION UP THERE?
THOSE ARE AUTOBOTS!
WHAT ARE THOSE LOATHSOME LOSERS DOING HERE?!
HUMANS, WE COME IN PEACE!
WHAT'S HAPPENING TO THEM?
I-I'LL SOUND THE ALARM!
PLEASE DIRECT US TO THE COMMANDER OF THIS OPERATION. WE WISH TO SPEAK WITH HIM.
DON'T MOVE OR WE'LL F-FIRE!
THE SUSPICIONS OF THE HUMANS ARE WASTING VALUABLE TIME! WE'LL HAVE TO FIND THE COMMANDER OURSELVES!
OPTIMUS-- BELOW I SEE G.B. BLACKROCK, ALONG WITH THE ONE WHO CLAIMED TO BE OUR LEADER ON THE TV BROADCAST!
SURELY, BLACKROCK WILL AID US!
BUT BEFORE THE AUTOBOTS CAN CONTACT THEIR HUMAN FRIEND
THE HUMANS ATTACK!
WITHOUT PROVOCATION, THE SAVAGES!
BKROW
FIRE AT WILL!
MY INCENDIARY MISSILES WILL BURN THEM TO A CARBON-BASED CRISP!
NO, TRACKS. THE ONLY WAY TO PROVE OUR PEACEFUL INTENTIONS IS NOT TO RETALIATE!
BOOM
BUMBLEBEE IS RIGHT!
KBAM

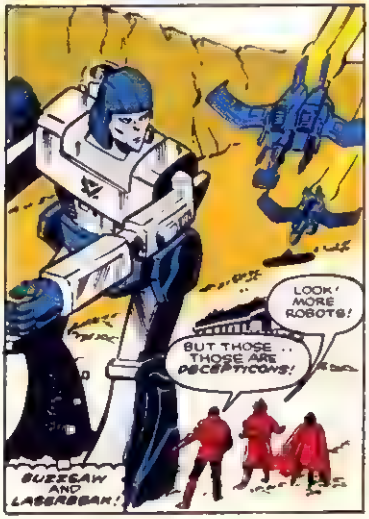


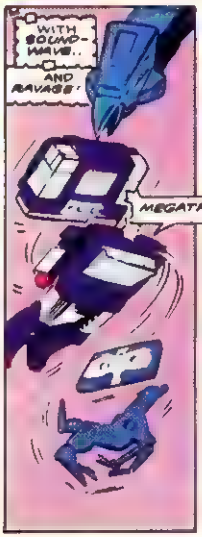


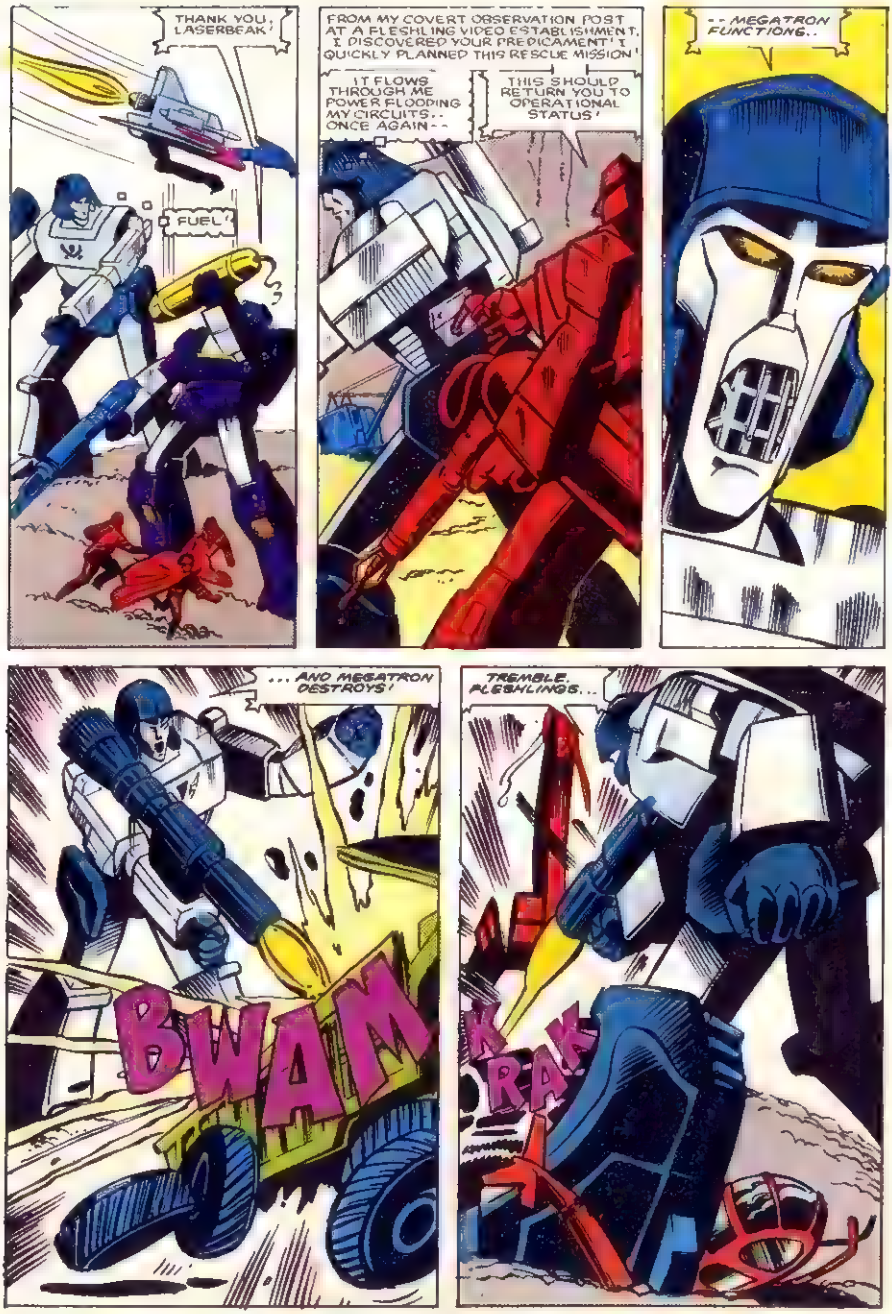
TELL THOSE SOLDIERS TO CEASE FIRE! CAN'T YOU SEE THE AUTOBOTS CAME HERE TO HELP US?
DON'T BE A FOOL, MAN! THEY CAME HERE TO FREE THEIR COMRADE!

BARRETT HAS NO QUICK ANSWER

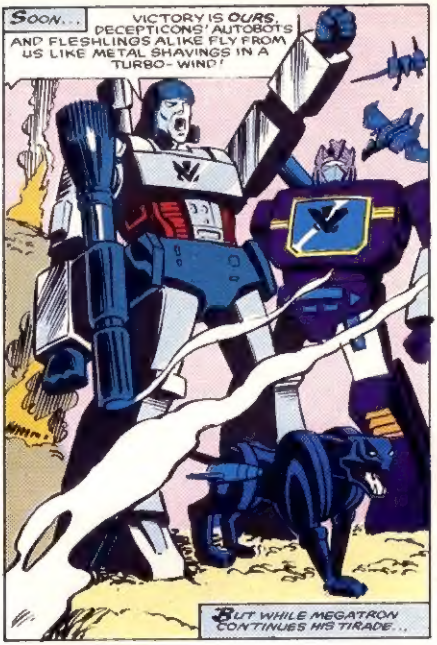
. NOR DOES HE HAVE TIME TO THINK OF ONE.

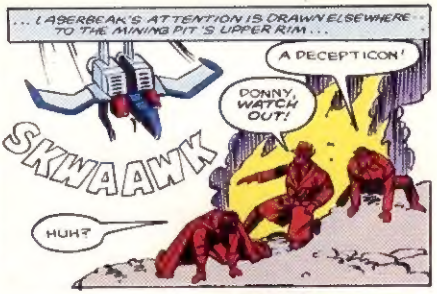




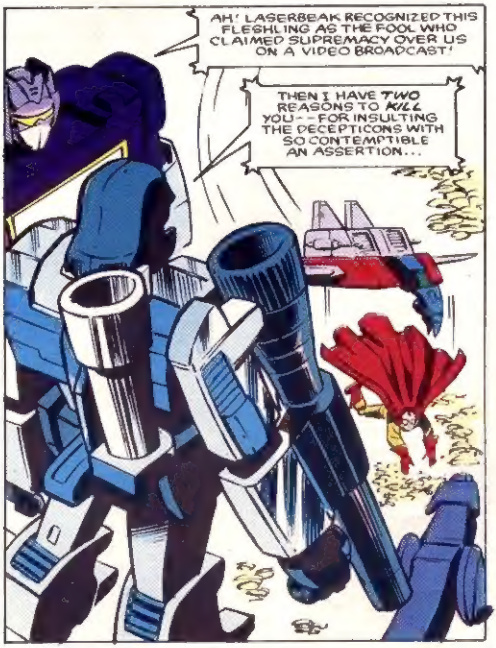

THANK YOU, LASERBEAK!
FUEL!
FROM MY COVERT OBSERVATION POST AT A FLESHLING VIDEO ESTABLISHMENT, I DISCOVERED YOUR PREDICAMENT! I QUICKLY PLANNED THIS RESCUE MISSION!
IT FLOWS THROUGH ME POWER FLOODING MY CIRCUITS.. ONCE AGAIN--
THIS SHOULD RETURN YOU TO OPERATIONAL STATUS!
--MEGATRON FUNCTIONS..
...AND MEGATRON DESTROYS!
BWAM
TREMBLE, FLESHLINGS...
KRAK

... TREMBLE BEFORE THE MIGHT OF MEGATRON -- YOUR NEW MASTER!
BWOMP
LED BY THE MURDEROUS MEGATRON, THE DECEPTICONS SWEEP THROUGH THE STRIP MINE, DEMOLISHING ALL IN THEIR PATH!
NO HUMAN VEHICLE OR WEAPON CAN WITHSTAND THEIR AWESOME ONSLAUGHT!
AND NO, AS FOR THE AUTOBOTS -- THE ONLY ONES WHO POSSESS THE POWER TO OPPOSE THEM...
RETREAT, AUTOBOTS...
... WE HAVE ALREADY... SUFFERED TOO MUCH DAMAGE... FROM THE HUMANS' ATTACKS!
COMBATTING THE DECEPTICONS NOW... IN OUR PRESENT CONDITION... WOULD MEAN CERTAIN DOOM!
IF THE HUMANS... HAD ONLY LISTENED TO US... INSTEAD OF... SHOOTING AT US...
WHAT...? UH-... DID YOU... EXPECT, SKIDS?... THEIR WAYS ARE BARBARIC, AT BEST...
BUT BLACKROCK... HOW COULD HE BE PART OF THIS? HE'S... OUR FRIEND!
AT LEAST I THOUGHT... HE WAS!
DO NOT JUDGE HUMANS TOO HARSHLY, AUTOBOTS... THEY ARE ONLY CAPABLE OF ACTING... UPON WHAT THEY UNDERSTAND...
... AND APPARENTLY... THEY DO NOT YET UNDERSTAND US!
SLOWLY, PAINFULLY, THE BATTERED AUTOBOTS DRIVE AWAY FROM THE STRIP MINE.


SOON...
VICTORY IS OURS, DECEPTICONS! AUTOBOTS AND FLESHLINGS ALIKE FLY FROM US LIKE METAL SHAVINGS IN A TURBO-WIND!
BUT WHILE MEGATRON CONTINUES HIS TIRADE...

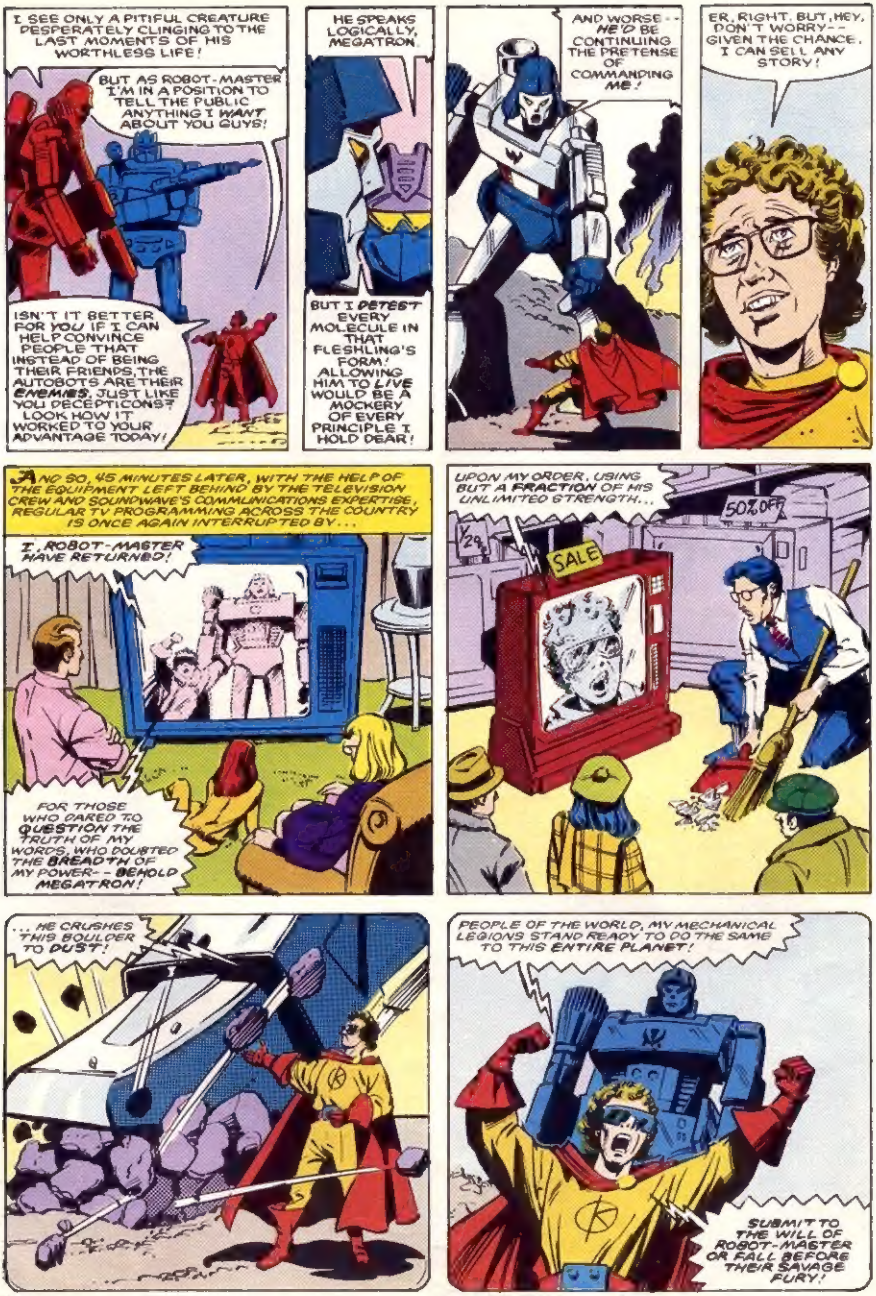

...LASERBEAK'S ATTENTION IS DRAWN ELSEWHERE... TO THE MINING PIT'S UPPER RIM...
A DECEPTICON!
DONNY, WATCH OUT!
SKWAAWK
HUH?

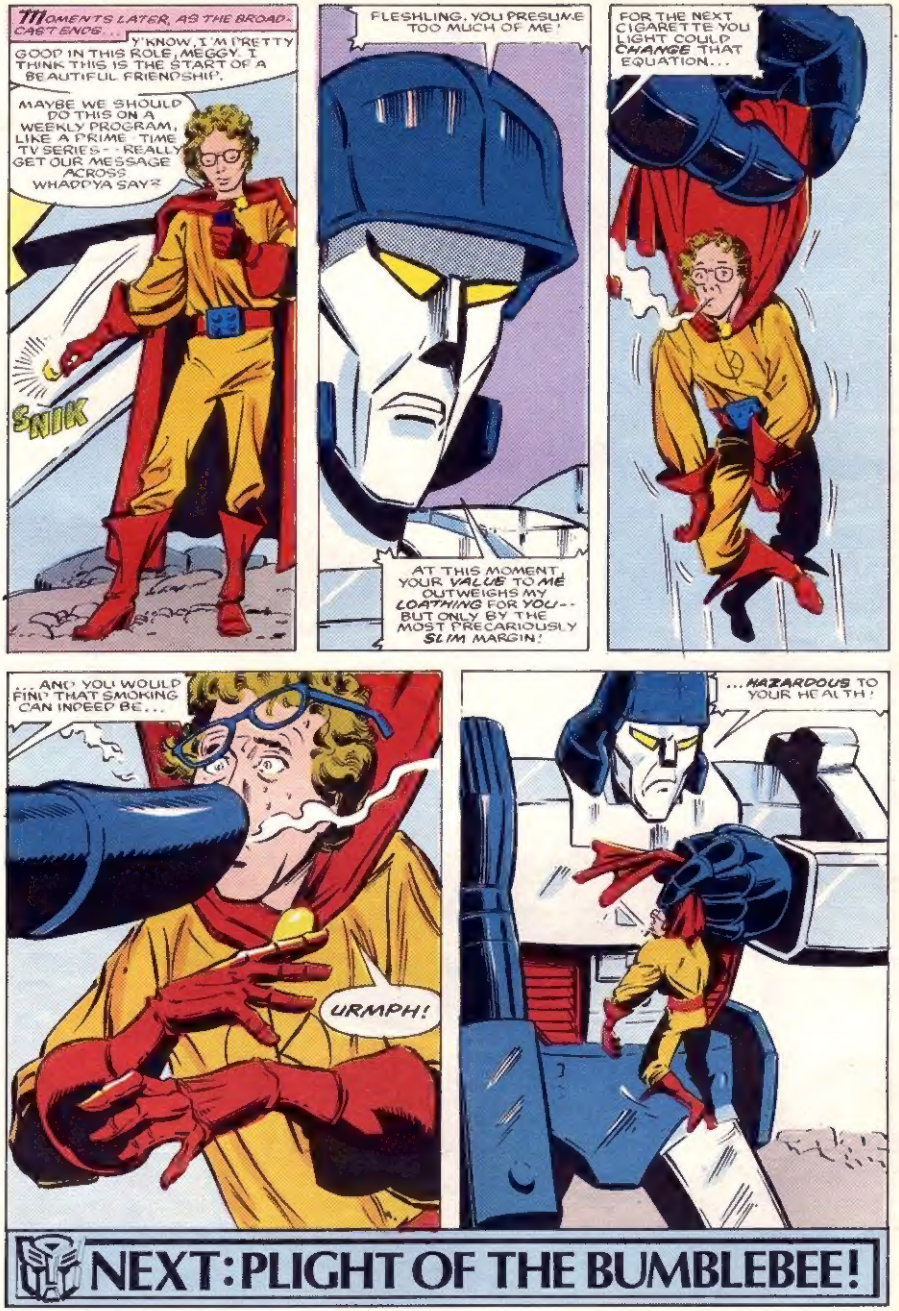
HEEEELP!


AH! LASERBEAK RECOGNIZED THIS FLESHLING AS THE FOOL WHO CLAIMED SUPREMACY OVER US ON A VIDEO BROADCAST!
THEN I HAVE TWO REASONS TO KILL YOU--FOR INSULTING THE DECEPTICONS WITH SO CONTEMPTIBLE AN ASSERTION...

W-WAIT!
...AND FOR DARING TO STRIKE ME WITH A MATCH!

H-HAS YOUR BRAIN BLOWN A FUSE?
C-CAN'T YOU SEE HOW I CAN...UM, HELP YOU?


I SEE ONLY A PITIFUL CREATURE DESPERATELY CLINGING TO THE LAST MOMENTS OF HIS WORTHLESS LIFE!
BUT AS ROBOT-MASTER I'M IN A POSITION TO TELL THE PUBLIC ANYTHING I WANT ABOUT YOU GUYS!
ISN'T IT BETTER FOR YOU IF I CAN HELP CONVINCE PEOPLE THAT INSTEAD OF BEING THEIR FRIENDS, THE AUTOBOTS ARE THEIR ENEMIES, JUST LIKE YOU DECEPTICONS? LOOK HOW IT WORKED TO YOUR ADVANTAGE TODAY!
HE SPEAKS LOGICALLY, MEGATRON.
BUT I DETEST EVERY MOLECULE IN THAT FLESHLING'S FORM! ALLOWING HIM TO LIVE WOULD BE A MOCKERY OF EVERY PRINCIPLE I HOLD DEAR!
AND WORSE-- ME'D BE CONTINUING THE PRETENSE OF COMMANDING ME!
ER, RIGHT. BUT, HEY, DON'T WORRY-- GIVEN THE CHANCE, I CAN SELL ANY STORY!
AND SO, 45 MINUTES LATER, WITH THE HELP OF THE EQUIPMENT LEFT BEHIND BY THE TELEVISION CREW AND SOUNDWAVE'S COMMUNICATIONS EXPERTISE, REGULAR TV PROGRAMMING ACROSS THE COUNTRY IS ONCE AGAIN INTERRUPTED BY...
I, ROBOT-MASTER HAVE RETURNED!
FOR THOSE WHO DARED TO QUESTION THE TRUTH OF MY WORDS, WHO DOUBTED THE BREADTH OF MY POWER-- BEHOLD MEGATRON!
UPON MY ORDER, USING BUT A FRACTION OF HIS UNLIMITED STRENGTH...
SALE
50% OFF
...HE CRUSHES THIS BOULDER TO DUST!
PEOPLE OF THE WORLD, MY MECHANICAL LEGIONS STAND READY TO DO THE SAME TO THIS ENTIRE PLANET!
SUBMIT TO THE WILL OF ROBOT-MASTER OR FALL BEFORE THEIR SAVAGE FURY!


MOMENTS LATER, AS THE BROADCAST ENDS...
Y'KNOW, I'M PRETTY GOOD IN THIS ROLE, MEGGY. I THINK THIS IS THE START OF A BEAUTIFUL FRIENDSHIP.
MAYBE WE SHOULD DO THIS ON A WEEKLY PROGRAM, LIKE A PRIME TIME TV SERIES--REALLY GET OUR MESSAGE ACROSS. WHADDYA SAY?
SNIK
FLESHLING, YOU PRESUME TOO MUCH OF ME!
AT THIS MOMENT, YOUR VALUE TO ME OUTWEIGHS MY LOATHING FOR YOU--BUT ONLY BY THE MOST PRECARIOUSLY SLIM MARGIN!
FOR THE NEXT CIGARETTE YOU LIGHT COULD CHANGE THAT EQUATION...
...AND YOU WOULD FIND THAT SMOKING CAN INDEED BE...
URMPH!
...HAZARDOUS TO YOUR HEALTH!
NEXT: PLIGHT OF THE BUMBLEBEE!